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NSC BRIEFING

8 June 1954

THE SITUATION IN MOROCCO

1. Indochina crisis also affects French in Morocco

A. As position France in Indochina deteriorates, Morocco situation likely to worsen.

1. Moroccan nationalists already extremist and terrorist can be expected exert continued or greater effort.

(a) Though unable throw out French, they can force maintenance large detachments troops in area, thus hamper French military elsewhere.

(b) Nationalists seeking, getting support Arab-Asian states.

2. Other hand, French, who value North Africa more than Indochina, more determined than ever maintain hold.

3. Communists expected take advantage.

(a) On 27 May, radio Budapest heard for first time in Arabic broadcasts beamed primarily French North Africa.

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(b) While nationalists in hope US support, have refused

Communist help in joint action against French,
extremist situation increases likelihood of Communist
participation.

III. Prospects

A. French concern demonstrated 20 May by removal General
Guillame (resident general), appointment career diplomat,
Francis Lacoste.

1. Few indications yet nature Lacoste program.

(a) He reportedly favors more moderate policy.

(b) On 2 June invited Moroccan nationalists--not recognized
leaders, however--to confer in Paris.

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b. Lacoste's task extremely difficult.

1. Friction, frustration, mutual distrust since 1950 has

hardened position both protagonists, French and nationalists.

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(a) Small conservative influential French settler

group Morocco has not changed its basically anti-nationalist position. Firm believes policy suppression.

(b) Nationalists probably not settle short of French

public promise independence with definite timetable and immediate steps toward autonomy. Even a change of sultans alone will probably not save situation.

2. American consul Casablanca believes only way out for

French is:

(a) Release nationalists and collaborate with them as no other Moroccans command support masses.

(b) Present sultan replaced by someone who could command widespread respect.

(c) Warns that due to local French settler opposition any improvement will have to come from Paris.

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